



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Gulf Islands National Seashore
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Gulf Islands National Seashore News Release

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Gulf Islands National Seashore re-opens much of hazardous materials closure on Horn Island.

During the Deepwater Horizon Oil spill, construction material containing asbestos was discovered at the Chimney Site, the remains of a World War Two era military facility on the northwest shore of Horn Island. There was also a report, later discredited, of mustard gas still present on the island. In response the National Park Service (NPS) closed the surrounding area.

After a cleanup effort which removed about 300 pounds of asbestos containing material, and further testing of the soil and air in the area, the NPS determined that most of the closure could be lifted. However, the area within 500 feet of the Chimney Site will remain closed.

Because this is a site where wind and waves create frequent changes, and more material could be exposed. This fall, a second round of cleaning and testing will occur. The remaining closure will be reevaluated pending those results.

“We are happy to be able to re-open most of this popular area to the public, and thank our visitors for their patience while we evaluated and mitigated the safely risks” said Deputy Superintendent Steven McCoy. Park visitors are also reminded that this area is still subject to seasonal closures to protect ospreys, eagles and nesting shorebirds.

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